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ABSTRACT

Proceedings of a conference to explore the impact of women's studies scholarship on the humanities are divided into eight sections. Section I, an introduction, describes the rationale of the conference and gives an overview of conference attendance. Section II introduces the keynote speakers. Section III contains the texts of the three keynote speeches. The first, "The Meaning of Human in the Humanities" (Elizabeth Minnich), analyzes the philosophical foundations of Western humanities and social sciences and examines ways in which traditional standards of excellence have been derived from a white/male cultural tradition. The second address, "The Prickly Art of Housekeeping: Reading Emily Dickinson" (Elizabeth Phillips), examines the impact of women's scholarship in humanities through a detailed study of Emily Dickinson's poetry. The final paper, "Worlds in Collision or Ships Passing in the Night? The Impact of Feminist Theory on Anthropology" (Karen Sacks), analyzes the impact of women's studies on anthropology. Section IV contains eight workshop reports. Topics covered are: change and the university culture; women, the novel, and the syllabus; women writers; women's history versus women in history; black women's studies; women's morality; women's studies and anthropology; and a perspective on women's studies after 10 years. Section V sums up the conference experience. The remaining three sections consist of reference material: a list of resources on curriculum transformation, conference directors and workshop leaders, and conference participants. (LP)

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EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

A Conference on Women's Studies and the Humanities

March 17 - 18, 1983

Elliott University Center
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

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A Conference Report

Edited by
Sandra Morgan
Judith White

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INTRODUCTION

by Sandra Morgen and Judith White

WHY WAS THIS CONFERENCE HELD?

"Equity and Excellence: A Conference on Women's Studies and the Humanities" was held at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro on March 17 and 18, 1983. The conference was held to explore the impact of Women's Studies scholarship on, and to analyze our assumptions about, the humanities.

It was a chance for those of us immersed in Women's Studies to step back and look at our liberal arts tradition from this new vantage point. It was a chance for those of us teaching in traditional disciplines to look at what might be revealed by a Women's Studies perspective. Together we looked at the implications of all this for efforts to integrate Women's Studies into humanities curricula in undergraduate liberal arts programs -- what many are now calling "mainstreaming."

In order to understand much of the discussion which is reported here, we need to keep in mind a bit of history concerning the Women's Studies movement. Fifteen years ago there were a few scattered courses focusing on Women in . . ., or Women and . . .. In rare instances, these course were grouped in one curriculum under the rubric of "Women's Studies." In the following ten years there occurred an explosion of courses, programs, committees, Women's Studies caususes within disciplines, Women's Studies Associations (national and regional), Women's Studies publications, conferences, and national meetings. This expansion continues with new Women's Studies Programs and Committees forming every year (at least four new programs were represented at this conference).

In the midst of this initial explosion, however, something else was going on. An ironic mixture of energy and enthusiasm from the Women's Studies movement, hesitance on the part of some school administrators and faculty, and the policies

of federal and private grant funding led to a new emphasis. Starting even ten years ago in some places, but particularly in the past five years, there has been an emphasis on mainstreaming, curriculum integration, or transformation of the curriculum. These three terms are related but not synonomous references to the strategy of curriculum change to incorporate the perspectives and research of Women's Studies into the traditional curriculum.

Surely this new direction began as an attempt to place Women's Studies research and teaching in a central position within the "mainstream" of American liberal arts curricula, to see that never again could the "prevailing direction" exclude the achievements and experiences of women. Somewhere between explaining this process and abbreviating its title, some of the original meaning has been lost. Many now hesitate to use the term mainstream. Several reasons exist for this reluctance. For example, it sounds to some as though the activity is being done to Women's Studies; others fear that this vital research will be packaged for easy addition to an established "Mainstream" curriculum; others argue that the term fails to convey how extensive a process of curriculum change is needed. Some use the terms "curriculum integration" or "balancing" to suggest that the traditional curriculum is undergoing some alteration or can be balanced by adding women.

The term transformation, however, is usually not used interchangably with the others. It signifies not only pointing out that women have been excluded, but also a questioning of why women have been excluded. The answers usually require not only addition to the "list," but also challenges to the process of "listing." The implications of such challenges will surely transform courses and eventually, disciplines. This notion -- which some see as the inevitable result of broadening the definition of human to include women -- was clearly the most provocative and provoking idea at the conference.

At their best, all curriculum revision projects are efforts to share the fruits of Women's Studies research and its excitement with more students and more faculty by including the achievements, concerns, and perspectives of women of all races in the traditionally required curriculum. How we might achieve this aim is at the heart of most of our discussion here.

WHO WAS HERE?

Nearly 100 educators, representing 25 different institutions, attended "Equity and Excellence." In addition we were joined by independent scholars, video artists, a female elected official, and several interested citizens. Of these participants, approximately 80 were white women, 15 were white men, and 10 were Black women. The demographic composition of the conference probably reflects one of the slowly changing but problematic realities of Women's Studies in North Carolina and the nation: until recently, Women's Studies did studies of and was studied by mainly whites and women. Currently, more work in Women's Studies is being done by Black women, although they are still less likely to receive institutional support for the work. Those in predominantly Black institutions frequently face or feel pressure to focus more on Black Studies, or they may simply lack resources for travel or research in Women's Studies regardless of their specialties. We consider the need for a discussion of Black Women's Studies scholarship crucial, and have made plans for a conference to focus on Black Women's Studies at NC Central University in November, 1983.

The educational institutions represented at the conference ranged from UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC-Greensboro, which have had Women's Studies Programs for 10 years, to community colleges which have no Women's Studies courses. Small private colleges and universities and public institutions which have recently formed Women's Studies Committees were also represented, along with many other institutions where faculty are interested in Women's Studies but hesitant about

whether present resources allow for new projects now. There were several institutions represented that have an emphasis on curriculum integration, some with separate Women's Studies programs, some without. In short, conference participants represented all the varieties of institutions and program arrangements which we have found in Women's Studies during the past ten years.

All of us - those actively involved in Women's Studies, to those just beginning to see its importance - benefit from a conference like Equity and Excellence. We all need to learn or remind ourselves how serious as intellectual endeavors Women's Studies and curriculum transformation are. Women's Studies challenges some of the most basic assumptions of the humanities, our individual disciplines, the "canon" of what we teach. We need to share ideas, strategies, information about what has worked and limitations of what we've done, and future goals.

Because those of us in Women's Studies are so conscious of the need for outreach, the need to expand the number of people who have an opportunity to appreciate the challenges of the field, we often criticize ourselves for not reaching beyond what some call "The Already Converted." This conference did reach beyond -- there were new faces; there were even some yet to be convinced of the need for or means of incorporating the new scholarship on women into the curriculum. The conference had some weaknesses: gaps of disciplines, and schools not represented. And, without question, Women's Studies must be self-reflexive to understand how it can become more relevant and encompassing of women of color, and working women in general.

For these reasons and more, we must continue to meet and study and talk, and argue if need be. Women's Studies in the academy is a young movement. Modern languages and literature have been around and studied for centuries, but, even so, the Modern Language Association meets once a year, and regional meetings and specialized conferences contribute varying degress of interest and excitement to

the continuing history of that discipline. A year of meetings in Women's Studies constitutes a significant portion of our collective intellectual history. We can benefit from taking these meetings seriously and sharing our discussions with a wider audience.

That is why we have produced this report.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

In the spirit of sharing what happened at "Equity and Excellence," we want to make a few final comments on how you might read the report, starting with an overview for those who were not at the conference.

We had three goals for participants at this conference:

- to re-examine the assumptions of the humanities in conjunction with the recent Women's Studies research;
- to explore specific work shaped by this research;
- to focus on specific changes in individual disciplines and curricula.

We saw all three experiences as necessary to understanding Women's Studies perspectives in the liberal arts curriculum. We saw a logic to realizing these goals in this particular order. Of course, we are aware that most of us have plunged into Women's Studies research or into reshaping our own courses without first examining the implications of this for our disciplines or for the humanities, but we are offering an ideal situation here.

Elizabeth Minnich's address sets up a framework in which all our different disciplines can be examined and discussed. She raises questions for all who teach, regardless of their subject matter. Her remarks help articulate a critical stance, a stance which is the common thread in the treatment of Women's Studies in other addresses and reports here.

The lectures by Elizabeth Phillips and Karen Sacks are two examples of the influence of feminist perspective on scholarship and ways to illustrate that influence. We present excerpts of Elizabeth Phillips' current reexamination of

the poetry of Emily Dickinson. By refusing to accept stereotypical explanations for Dickinson's poetic motivation, Phillips opens doors to new interpretations -- based, ironically, on evidence clearly available but heretofore ignored in favor of romantic mythology. Karen Sacks presents a survey of the influence -- and lack thereof -- which feminist perspectives have had on anthropology. We offer these abbreviated versions of their work as models of how one might start in questioning specific assumptions and methods in individual disciplines.

The workshop reports are meant to give some idea of the energy, resources, and concern evident at this conference. We edited these reports to cut repetition, but tried to leave much of them in original form to convey the different "flavors" of the people and the questions.

The Afterword is our attempt to sum up the experience of the conference. We have been immersed in the experiences of those of you who attended the conference -- through conversations, evaluations, and these reports. Here, those blend with our own experiences of the conference and of the winter and spring in which it took place. Both of us have been to other conferences; we have both been involved in planning another for this fall. We've been doing some comparing and contrasting which has brought "Equity and Excellence" into clearer focus for us. We offer these remarks with every expectation that they will provoke responses. Please share them with us.

EDITORS' PREFACE TO THE KEYNOTE SPEECHES

It will be impossible to capture the power of the three keynote addresses which follow in summary form. In each case the details of the arguments, and in the summaries of Drs. Phillips and Sacks addresses many of the arguments themselves, have had to be edited for reasons of space. Nevertheless, we here reprint in summary form these speeches because we believe they accurately reflect the tone, the intent, and the quality of the scholarship at this conference.

Elizabeth Minnich is well-known for her penetrating analyses of the philosophy which serves as the foundation for the Western humanities and social sciences. In this piece she argues that standards of excellence, the supposedly "objective criteria" that have been used to exclude women from the lists and studies of the "great works," are derived from a priviledged white male ethos and cultural tradition. Thus, though these works are often great insofar as they express the lives, thoughts and feelings of this category of humans (priviledged white men), they cannot be said to speak for or to humanity as a whole, and should not be used to exclude the expressions and voices of the many.

Elizabeth Phillips' address on Emily Dickinson ranged from a feminist re-reading of some of Dickinson's poems to a serious investigation of the constraints the larger world imposed on Ms. Dickinson and her various responses, poetic and lived, to that situation. Here we reprint only a small portion of the address, one that is an interesting example of how someone in Women's Studies reading the same material available to critics for years sees very different meanings and possibilities than those with narrower, and gender-biased perspectives have grasped. Phillips argues that Emily Dickinson was far from the reclusive "mad" woman so often portrayed by critics. She demonstrates how we may have read a good deal more interiorization and withdrawal

into Dickinson's poems than is warranted, and that, in fact, at least some of them intentionally spoke about and to very real events occurring in the world of her time.

In contrast to Phillips' choice of exemplifying the impact of Women's Studies scholarship on the humanities through a detailed study of one poet and her work, Karen Sacks chose to take a macro-view of the impact of Women's Studies on the discipline of anthropology. She turns a critical eye to the discipline, demonstrating how certain sexist "core explanatory myths" central to American cultural ideology have gone unexamined by anthropologists and still inform some of the most basic assumptions and theories of the field. Having to sacrifice detail as she takes us back three to four million years and across the globe in order to expose some of the limitations of current anthropological theories of human nature, human evolution and social organization, Sacks' talk is an exciting challenge to a discipline which purports to be the study of man(kind).

THE MEANING OF 'HUMAN' IN THE HUMANITIES

Dr. Elizabeth Minnich

Women's Studies Consultant,
Professor of Philosophy
Graduate School of the Union
for Experimenting Colleges
and Universities

The liberal arts, as they emerged during the Middle Ages and became established courses of study in the first great universities, were distinctly and purposefully distinguished from the servile arts. "Servile," of course, derives from the word for slave - it has to do with those who not only do but MUST serve others. The liberal arts, on the other hand, were for those "worthy of the life of a free man." The humanities developed in this divided world and originally had to do with those studies that humanized, made more humane, the few people "worthy of the life of a free man."

There are important and lasting issues folded into these terms. One of the most striking is worth pointing out first: the inclusive term for our kind on the earth, "human," figures as the least inclusive term in a hierarchical educational scheme. Not only is it the least inclusive, but it is also set up as an ideal type, as normative: The highest goal is to become more refined as a human, more humane. How was one to become more what one was (which is assumed here to be part of becoming better)? By studying about one's own kind. The sense of a noble kind of being which has compiled a cultural tradition that expresses its nobility in a way exemplary and inspirational for following generations is vivid -- and sits right next to the recognition of the persistence of another kind of being which has NOT compiled such a tradition and whose story and arts are neither exemplary nor inspirational. The liberal arts, with the humanities prime among them, have always been simultaneously considered

the highest learning, the most exemplary of "human" achievement and possibility, AND suited specifically and exclusively for the very few who are "worthy of the life of a free man." The servile arts, the arts of the domestic sphere and of the market place, gave the liberal arts their meaning by contrast.

They still do, only today we assume that it is technical training that stands in distinction from the liberal arts, and that the humanities stand out among the liberal arts as being at the farthest possible remove from the technical. The humanities enrich our specifically human possibilities; the liberal arts provide a more variegated setting for our study of our kind, allowing some topics and some modes of thought that aren't of the highest but are unarguably impressive and useful (such as laboratory science, studio art, social science fieldwork); and technical training and the schools to which it is relegated continues to provide a marker for the other end of the educational scale by aiming at the development of the solely useful -- rather than uplifting -- technés, techniques, skills. We continue, then, to work within an invidious educational hierarchy in which the most inclusive term, "human," occurs in the name for the "highest," most ennobling and most exclusive and most highly valued area.

We continue within a tradition in which the very few defined the essence of what it meant to be human in terms that made it possible only for them -- thereby simultaneously branding all those whose lives and work made the "human" lives of the few possible less than "human," just as their (our) story and arts were branded "servile," while those of the very few, cultivated in leisure resting on the labor of the many, were titled "liberal," and "humane."

Odd, no? But not really. The political/economic/social order out of which the first formalized notions about learning emerged within the tradition we call "ours" (the white male Euro-American tradition) was itself hierarchi-

cal and invidiously divided. A life "worthy of a free man" meant a life led not only free of all servile activities - that is, all activities that serve others or that serve natural needs - but one led in pursuit of the "highest" kind of arts, those that are ends in themselves, again, that serve nothing other than themselves.

The notion of what it means to be human we have inherited corresponds to the notion of what it means to be worthy of a free life, which itself corresponds to the notion of freedom we have from a slave-holding society that relegated not only slaves but women, artisans and all resident foreigners to servility, to un-free and not-quite-human lives. It is somewhat curious that we still believe that studying the story of this tradition as told by those few it benefitted is essentially ennobling -- humanizes us, makes us more perfect of our kind.

If we assume for the moment that there are, as I unshakeably believe there are, works within that tradition that are superb and fully worthy of continued study, we still have to ask whether studying them can provide <u>the same</u> ennobling experience for the majority of humankind as it does for the privileged few. Can I, who am of the gender that caused Augustine such anguish in his struggle for his soul, participate in his confessions and revelations fully? Am I to see myself in him, or in the women he either sanctifies or flees? What does it do to me to identify with him, as he defines himself? What does it do to me to identify with Woman the mother or temptress? Where do I have to stand and have my being in the world he gives us? And ask the same for Black people who study the Humanities. How often is there a view of the world presented in the curriculum as it is at present that is NOT riddled with more or less explicit racism? How often is there a view of the world that speaks to the experience of racism itself - or that speaks of nobility in terms not of

the privileged white males whose freedom rested on the labor of others but of a human nobility that took strength from enduring and overcoming the harsh challenges of an all-too-human world?

Why do we persist in studying as the epitomy of nobility and of what it means to be human and as a vision of a life worthy of free humans, works and figures and stories and skills developed by the few who were incapable of seeing the humanity in the majority of humankind?

My point is, in fact, a simple one. We work today within a tradition that defined as the highest kind of life for humans a life that was an end in itself, enshrining as the highest kind of thought that which was an end in itself, and associating with that highest kind of life and thought <u>one kind of human</u>, from among whom still fewer could emerge as the very type of human against whom we are all to be judged. This judgement comes, of course, whether or not we were ever considered even in the running, or allowed into the race at all. Another way of putting that is to say that "our" tradition has built itself around the study of Man and of Mankind -- study of singular universals that by definition exclude diversity. A few made themselves the type and measure for the majority.

I hasten to add that it may be the case that only a few may be the type and measure of excellence. For the moment at least I have no quarrel with that. I do have a very serious quarrel with the idea that the few who are excellent must emerge from among a predefined small <u>kind</u> of human AND with the idea that we should continue to take our notions of excellence after the fact from what those few have done, said, thought, and valued.

If we want to know what the best of, for and by humankind is, we cannot restrict our search to the few. But that is what our curriculum today says we have indeed done. If you look at what we teach with the eyes of an expatriate, it is immediately evident that the majority of humankind is white, Euro-

American male, and that the categories of what is significant, valued and judged excellent are suited to that apparent majority. We study what mostly privileged white men have done; what they have written; what they have created. They are who wrote the books, and they are the subjects of the books. They are who wrote the music, and they are the conductors, critics and scholars of the music -- and who painted the paintings and analyzed them. They are the authors of the psychology and sociology texts, and the categories fit them, making of the rest of us sub-categories, problems, deviants, special cases or invisible. They are the philosophers who define what Man means, and what truth and meaning and equality and individuality and ethics mean.

Once you have looked at what we teach as if it were material from a different culture, with your eyes wide open to what the structures reveal, the wonder becomes that so few have spoken as if they were so many for so long. Suddenly you realize that a reading list composed entirely of white male authors elicits no comment from anyone at all, while a reading list composed of all black, female authors, for example, would indeed draw attention. White males are un-prefixed: They are Man, humankind, the type and the model, The real majority of humankind is prefixed: Women's history is quite other from history, as if that weren't on the face of it an absurdity. History is either about the significant events and patterns and eras and achievements of all of us, or it is white male history. The essence of humanity having been defined by and for the few has left us with far too narrow a vision NOT SEEN AS SUCH but seen as exemplary for the whole.

That means that as scholars we have not been telling the truth. We have not talked about how the tradition developed, about its exclusions and devaluations as they have been part of the weave we call THE tradition. Discussions today about "the humanities" are at their clearest not in talking about what

the humanities in fact are and are for, but in distinguishing them from other spheres of learning. Training, we say, is not the same as educating. Educate comes from a root that means to lead out -- it is to help us transcend. The question is: what are we transcending?

Originally, the few who were allowed to be literate were concerned with transcending the neediness of human existence. Still in Hobbes' time, the few saw the lives of the many as "nasty, brutish and short." It was clear to them that such lives could not be noble, were not to be desired in any terms. What then emerged is fairly straightforward: some humans, the majority in fact, were relegated to serving the needs of the few and their subservience was used, in classical circular style, to justify itself. If they served, they were by nature servile and so OUGHT to serve.

Insofar as education has been designed to lead men out of the matrix of human life, with its relatedness, its neediness, its sheer survival issues, it has been, I believe, defined in terms that are not only singular yet universal but oppositional in severely limited ways. Because the linking together of certain kinds of human activities, those having to do with necessity, and certain kinds of humans, those forced to deal with necessity, has gone on too long altogether. Men, to justify their oppression of women, defined women out of full humanity; white men, to justify their oppression of slaves, defined slaves out of full humanity; rich men, to justify their exploitation of others, defined working people out of full humanity.

What might "full humanity" begin to look like if we sought for the best from us all, and looked again for the qualities that humanize us? Because so many voices have been silenced for so long, that is hard to say. But as we approach the tradition taught as 'ours' afresh, willing to see it in its partiality as well as its transcendence, its severe limitations as well as

its picture of greatness, we begin to see a new vision on the other side of the critique.

Let me give you some examples. While the public was seen as the only sphere of significance in 'human life,' the private (de-prived, idios= idiotic) was not studied. Rhetoric was a liberal art, conversation was not. Greatness was defined as singular, so all that enabled the great to be and to transcend was removed, mystifying the whole notion. Cooperation became a problem for judgment, and still is; If students work cooperatively, we do not know how to grade individuals. If they compete, we are quite comfortable and reward the winner with little questioning of the implicit learning we have fostered, the denigration of means for the sake of ends. Anonymity became a curse; fame, a blessing. Since only what was public was remembered, sung of, studied, those deprived saw no reflection of their lives to help them transcend. They were transcended, they did not transcend. The quest for fame became a noble one; the effort to live with and for others, a servile, feminine one. Individualism came to be defined as oppositional: the individual stands out, stands alone, is singular. Relations become, then, encumbrances and the arts of those who value and maintain them are not studied, valued, transmuted into art, remembered, advanced.

"Our" tradition uses singular names to sum up the achievements of many. We decry, now, the same effect of a vast popular media system. Yet, it works in the same meaning system as does our curriculum. All of us can give a name or two to associate with most great movements, events, achievements of the human spirit. What does that teach the students we wish to make more humane except that getting your name out front is, finally, what matters?

While the singular universal Man centered the tradition, we could not deal with diversity. Diversity, difference, became inferiority and/or devi-

ance. If Man is THE type, what is woman? If white is the one color prefix we don't use, what becomes of the majority of humankind that is not white in the material we teach our students, the future citizens of a shrinking world? We end up with sameness and otherness, not sameness and difference. And without difference, we cannot truly deal with equality, which presumes differences. IF we were all the same, equality would be meaningless.

With sanity, and intellectual stages of development, and moral stages of development, defined out of the study of a small population of privileged white males, what happens to the rest of us? And what happens, also, to the few who are not taught about, and are not taught to value, other qualities, modes of thought, kinds of modes of thought, kinds of morality? If man=human, then woman is either a normal man and so an abnormal woman, or a normal woman and so an abnormal human (Broveman study). If sanity has to do with fit with the prevailing modes of thought and valuation, how do those of us who are not thought about or valued in that mode find our sanity?

While we think of kinds of thought as hierarchically arranged according to whether or not they are ends in themselves, are not 'practical' or 'useful,' (i.e. are not infected with servility or domesticity), can we ever hope to ask for responsibility from those who know? Can we fault the scientist who cares not whether the lab in which work is done is aimed at germ warfare or not, so long as the work itself is 'pure?' Can we hope to balance out the value system that says 'pure research' is 'higher' than the learning done by those actively engaged in situations in which consequences are immediately evident? Can we hope to bring theory and practice together again? Can we hope to value the work of those who teach with those who carry out research? Can we hope to value the work of those who teach young children on a par with those who teach only a select few and then only inadvertently, as a by-product of research?

We have a very curious notion of the 'highest' kind of learning, I think. The highest is the closest to complete tautology, uninfected by intention, interest, concern for consequences, the diversity of reality -- WHY?

While our education represents very few of the voices we will need to hear as citizens, how can we hope that those who are educated will be able to hear other citizens in the future? We take one mode of speech as the only proper kind, and exclude the others. Many students, prepared by the present curriculum, cannot read Sojourner Truth's brilliant oratory because it was recorded in the dialect in which it was spoken. Many cannot see the art in the brilliant work done by craftspeople working in a tradition refined through centuries, but see art in almost anything hung on a gallery wall -- is that real judgment? It has been established by test after test that relatively few of those educated within our curriculum are able to judge anything with a female name on it as being as good as something with a male name on it -- even when the work judged is exactly the same. Is that the kind of human judgment we wish to be teaching?

Again, if we want to know what is truly the best that can be done by humans, what are truly the most noble qualities, what are truly the abilities that humanize us and prepare us for political, cultural and world-wide citizenship, surely we need to develop freer, sharper, more critical judgment than we are developing at present. When one encounters only one type of humankind too often, and only respectfully, one loses the ability to see others -- that is a simple human fact. What we have no experience of, we cannot judge -- or we can only judge by the narrow standards we have.

The "human" in humanities needs to be uncovered for the first time in human history, and the first step to doing so is the admission of the obvious fact that we have covered only the few as if they were not only the dominant

few but The Best. Being dominant does not make you better; the warrior is not the prototype of humankind that will humanize us all and make us more humane. Yet we are much more likely to study the warrior than we are the healer; the court musician than the folk; the rhetorician than the conversationalist; the ruthless robber baron than the founder of social services; the rebel against the King for man's rights than the rebel against the man for human rights; the novel about war and bravery than the letters about the courage of survival in isolation. And we are more likely to derive our categories of what makes any work at all excellent only for the few so that, even when we turn to the works and lives and stories and achievements of the many, we are not equipped to judge them appropriately.

Someday we will teach the humanities, the study of humankind. We are not doing so now, however great in particular terms are the works in the tradition we do teach. We approach it, but we have not broken free of the bemusement of a prejudiced, narrow past. We can now do so, if we will start quite simply by adding prefixes where they indeed apply, as in "white male history," "men writers," and then by asking whether what is covered does include women, can include Black women and men -- and whether it was intended to or not. If we can see what we have for what it is, we will retain its greatness and inspirational and informational value, while opening the range of diversity essential if we are to stop equating the few with the type, the standard, the norm of us all.

The only loss here is of a falsely claimed universality. The rest is all promise.

THE PRICKLY ART OF HOUSEKEEPING: READING EMILY DICKINSON (AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS, 1839-1886)

Dr. Elizabeth Phillips

Department of English
Wake Forest University

When Emily Dickinson wrote in April of 1862, "I had a terror since September that I could tell to none; and so I sing as the boy does of the burying ground, because I am afraid," she surely must have known the speculation that the word terror would provoke.

The Terror, if we follow the most sensational reading of her life and work, is expressed in anxieties about madness, a tendency toward madness, or actual madness. Important feminist critics, studying relationships between biography, selected poems, and the historical situation of woman as writer in the nineteenth century, have themselves been susceptible to the image of Emily Dickinson as a heroine in a Gothic house of fiction. I am troubled by the ironic view of the first woman to become a great American poet as half-cracked, a mad woman in a bedroom, or a reclusive spider sewing webs in which we are all entangled.

An oversimplified outline of Emily Dickinson's life begins with an image of a high-spirited and lively young girl who enjoyed "giving three cheers for American Independence!" when a friend -- Susan Gilbert, later to marry Emily's brother, Austin -- outwitted relatives in order to do as she pleased (Letters, I, 233). Young womanhood, however, ended for Emily in the fall of 1861. The most common explanation of the terror is that she was disappointed in love.

The evidence is familiar. She put on white, withdrew from society, and wrote her heart out. Furthermore, there are three undated love letters, probably rough drafts, to an unidentified "Master." Two of them make clear that

she has been seriously hurt, and imply that she has been rejected. She compares herself to a "Bird" hit by a bullet, or says she suffers from "a Tomahawk" in her side but "Her master stabs her more," and pleads for him to come to New England and to Amherst in the summer or to let her "seek" him (Letters, II, 372-74, and 392).

One poem, "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain," has been especially important - I could say crucial - in the psychobiography of the poet. Because the poem expresses a disturbed emotional state from the point of view of first person singular, it is cited as indisputable proof of the poet's psychosis (See, for example, John Cody, After Great Pain: The Inner Life of Emily Dickinson, p. 29, passim). In view of the use of the poem as a document in a case history rather than a poem, it is tempting to believe that its author shrewdly anticipated the fashions of both Freudian and formal literary criticism. Writing in July of 1862 to the inquisitive Higginson, she warned him that "when I state myself, as the Representative of the Verse -- it does not mean -- me -- but a supposed person." Many readers, nevertheless, ignore the poet's caveat, and contend that Dickinson, like other poets, particularly women poets, wished to hide behind a mask. She was, it is argued, more solipsistic than she acknowledged; many of her poems are, certainly, acts of self-analysis. Otherwise, how could she have known what she knew? Once she was hopelessly disappointed in love, she turned inward; her life was without external events. The possibility that she depicts the impact of an actual funeral on a "supposed person" -- a persona -- is almost too simple, even when the grammatical order of the first line of the poem at least encourages one to consider a movement from the world out there to the images within the mind that responds to it. We should not raise routine epistemological questions; the poem is a metaphysical conceit, isn't it? Or is it?

Perhaps Thomas Johnson's error in dating the poem, "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" c. 1861 is an honest one, since the more accurate date -- c. 1862 -- recently determined by R. W. Franklin (See The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson, I, 341) would make little difference in consideration of the poem as a record of her collapse. The revised date is, nonetheless, significant in a study of the genesis of "I felt a Funeral" and its relation to a series of events she shared with friends, relatives, and the people of Amherst during the American Civil War. Although an interest in connections between the verse and the war is round about to our concern with issues in women's studies, it is advisable that we attend to Dickinson's aesthetic and allow the poem a life of its own in surroundings which are not so self-centered as critics imply when they locate its source in her "mental abberation" and "gradual conquest by madness" (Griffith, The Long Shadow, pp. 206-207, 247).

On December 31, 1861, she reported to Louise Norcross that "Frazer Stearns is just leaving Annapolis. His father has gone to see him today." Young Stearns was the son of the president of the college at which Emily's father was treasurer. The letter concluded "I hope the ruddy face won't be brought home frozen?" (Letters, II, 386). Lieutenant Stearns was Amherst's first battle casualty, March 14, 1862. "The event was especially shocking to all who knew him" (See Johnson, Letters, II, 400).

Writing in late March to the Norcross cousins, Emily tells them of "brave Frazer -- 'killed at Newbern,' . . . his big heart shot away by a 'minie ball.'" She reports almost objectively, "Just as he fell, in his soldier's cap, with his sword at the side, Frazer rode through Amherst. Classmates to the right of him, classmates to the left of him, to guard his narrow face!" She abandons the martial rhythms as she recounts what she has heard of the episode of war: "He fell by the side of Professor Clark, his superior officer - lived

ten minutes in a soldier's arms, asked twice for water -- murmured just, 'My God!' and passed! Sanderson, his classmate, made a box of boards in the night, put the brave boy in, covered with blanket, rowed six miles in the night to reach the boat, -- so poor Frazer came . . . . He went to sleep from the village church. Crowds came to tell him goodnight . . . . Nobody here could look on Frazer -- not even his father." She then explains without giving a reason, that the doctor would not allow it. "So our part in Frazer is done." The restraint with which she conveys the details of the news is matched by her understanding that the cousins will mourn the death of their friend: " . . . you must come next summer, and we will mind ourselves of this young crusader -- too brave that he could fear to die. We will play his tunes . . . , we will try to comfort his broken-hearted Ella, who, as the clergyman said, 'gave him peculiar confidence.'" There is then a break in the letter and Emily says in one simple sentence: "Austin is stunned completely." (See Letters, II, 397).

"I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" has its origins, then, not in the poet's personal collapse but in her sympathetic -- and imaginative -- participation in the mourning with those she loved and for the ruddy faced boy they all finished knowing. It belongs, in fact, to a sequence of four poems that culminate in an elegy expressing gratitude for the magnitude of sacrifice he embodied. How can we know if she does not tell us that the poems are "war" poems? Would the successful poem be more meaningful if there were a footnote explaining its connection to a war? Reading "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" as "a unique and daring statement of a condition of mind near to madness" (Reeves, Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson, xxxix) is, in fact, an acknowledgment of its power; but in overlooking the origins of the poem's images and emotions, critics have denied the efficacy of an imagination in transfiguring

one's perceptions of the other as well as of oneself into powerful language. And, finally, of signal importance to us, they have also denied Emily Dickinson a measure of her humanity. When Whitman says, in "Song of Myself," "Agonies are one of my changes of garments,/ I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded person" (II, 844-45), he is stating both a spiritual ideal and a creative principle which Emily Dickinson exemplifies in her work.

WORLDS IN COLLISION OR SHIPS PASSING IN THE NIGHT? THE IMPACT OF FEMINIST THEORY ON ANTHROPOLOGY

Dr. Karen Sacks

Director of Research
Business and Professional
Women's Foundation, and
Research Associate
Department of Anthropology
Duke University

As feminist theory in anthropology has evolved it has come to challenge some of the very foundations of the field. To me, as a feminist, it seems like a Ptolomaic anthropology has been confronted with the feminist equivalent of Copernicus. But she seems hardly to be making a ripple on the daily business of academic anthropology.

On the one hand, feminist theory is a profound challenge to anthropology and anthropology has not ignored it. Rather, much current anthropology is a response to these new ideas. On the other hand, much of that response has been to reassert old ideas - either as an angry backlash, or by incorporating superficial aspects of feminist paradigms, while retaining the core of the old ways of thinking. Moreover, much of this reassertion is written with no mention of feminist works; we have been invisibilized.

Anthropology has traditionally defined its subject matter as the long ago and the far away, pre-industrial forms of social organization, so-called primitive or exotic societies, and human and pre-human pre-history. We are very curious about who "we" are in both cultural and biological terms; and we figure that the way to find out is to compare ourselves to what and who we are not. Thus, one studies primates in implicit contrast to humans -- what do we share as a common, essential primate heritage, and where do we differ.

We also study individual societies so that we may appreciate the diverse

organizations and values of humanity, and learn the cultural premises we operate by and the social and economic bases of those premises. Ethnographies drive home the point that there are many ways of living and that one's own is neither necessary nor natural.

The problem in all this is that an embarrassingly large part of what anthropology has to say about other times and cultures has been shaped by a set of semi-conscious, popular understandings or core explanatory myths about what is necessary and natural. These myths shape what our studies of other societies and species tell us about themselves and ourselves.

Perhaps because its form is not supernatural, we have not even recognized the core explanatory myth that animates much of scholarly and popular thought. The myth has many names because like all important social myths it has many forms and variants. In social sciences, especially those of the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it has come to be called social darwinism. In history, it has been called the cult of true womanhood or the domestic ideology.

It is not surprising that biology has been the metaphor for industrial capitalist social relations. One might almost say that this version of biology became a secular religion with the rise of industrialism. Mother nature replaced the divine father as a culturally central explanatory principle in the course of the transition. This religious and prescriptive version of biology has been a social weapon against the aspirations of women, or workers and of minorities. The version pertinent to anthropology asserts that a very inegalitarian, sexual, class and racial status quo is natural -- that today's world is the result of a struggle in which biologically "superior" cultures (western), races (white), gender (male), and individuals (rich, productive property owners) eliminated or subjugated their inferiors.

The racist and elitist aspects or social darwinism have been criticized and rejected often enough in American anthropology (though they too keep reappearing), but the gender and more fundamentally hierarchical notions were barely touched until the women's movement brought feminist consciousness to the academy. By fundamentally hierarchical I mean: a) the assumption that one cannot have any division of labor without inequalities in wealth, power, and prestige, and b) the assumption that a sexual division of labor is a defining human characteristic.

Anthropology's versions were often subtle variations on the following basic syllogism:

1. Making babies and shaping culture are incompatible.
2. Women make babies.
3. Therefore, only men can make culture.

As production moved out of the home with the beginnings of industrialization, women came to be equated with motherhood, and motherhood came to mean the opposite of production. Family and society were seen as natural and complementary opposites and the natural temperaments of each sex suited them for their part in the division of labor being engendered by industrial capitalism. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, physical and emotional characteristics associated with motherhood were stressed in both social science and in popular explanations. Women were said to be too weak, stupid, and emotional (Spencer 1884; Thomas 1907) to exercise equal rights because their developmental energies were all channeled into their wombs. With the refutation or abandonment of innatist approaches elsewhere in anthropology, the complementary separateness of the spheres came to be stressed; motherhood itself, rather than women's temperament, was alleged to be functionally incompatible with equal rights. Women could not be in two places at once, and family and society were

universally and necessarily separate places. Thus women had to stay home for the sake of civilization.

Anthropology's discussion of human evolution and its analysis of "the primitive" even today share a common social darwinist assumption: that becoming human required a division of labor associating women with home, hearth, babies, and sentiment, and men with the public production, power, and the creation of society and social progress. This view of "Man the Hunter," a dominant evolutionary theory, was best summarized by Washburn and Lancaster in an essay in a book of the same name. Their thesis was that hunting was the key activity differentiating humans from non-humans, and the key activity by which humans differentiated themselves.

The story starts with a bipedal being giving birth to a relatively helpless infant 3-4 million years ago. Because infants are so helpless, women are burdened and tied to a home base with their food-gathering activities being quite limited. Meanwhile, men went off to hunt in groups, to become the breadwinners for women and children. Incest prohibitions and marriage developed to make sure women and children were provided for, but mainly to prevent competition among men for women. In this story, patriarchal nuclear families become an original and defining human institution; as does a division of society into two spheres -- a home/female domain, and a male/public one. In addition, virtually all of humanity's evolutionary development is attributed to men. Because hunting required a great deal of coordination and communication, populations that developed them expanded and thrived, at the expense of those that did not. The first tools are usually seen to be hunting weapons, and Washburn and Lancaster wax enthusiastic over the beauty and symmetry of projectile points -- the source of early art.

Sally Slocum's early essay, "Woman the Gatherer" was a diamond in the

rough for a new feminist paradigm of human origins and development. All too briefly let me say that Slocum turned Man-the-Hunter on its head, arguing that women's gathering activities provided the stability and bulk in their and their children's diets. This recognition meant that women were not dependent on males, and that the mother-child food-sharing dyad is as likely a candidate for the bond around which social organization evolved as the nuclear family of Man-the-Hunter. Moreover, gathering necessitated the same evolutionary advances Man-the-Hunter attributes to hunting: the need for tools, language, communication and social organization.

Recently, Slocum's theory has been greatly refined by a host of feminist anthropologists. Some of the more exciting and revolutionary findings are:

1) the centrality of matrifocality among primates and collectors (hunting and gathering societies). Once we recognized that pattern, we began to rethink kinship in all sorts of societies, not least of which is our own. We are coming to see sharply the economic and political bases of kinship ties and women's central place in creating and maintaining them. If kinship is political and economic relations, as even sexist anthropology has acknowledged, then it is inaccurate to argue for:

2) a division of societies into a public and private sphere. Indeed, that concept is beginning to appear increasingly inappropriate for most if not all societies. In its place feminist perspectives see a unitary organization of political and economic relations that stresses the political and economic aspects of primary or kin relations along with the emotional aspects involved in even the most bureaucratic, "rational" relations -- that is, people feel about <u>something</u>, and feel strongly about important things. Power and food are very important in all cultures.

3) our distinction of work and housework has never held up in pre-wage

societies for obvious reasons. But now women's economic contributions are being increasingly taken seriously; and women do a major share of subsistence production in most of the world's cultures -- and, again, increasingly, in our own.

To sum up the contrast between man the hunter and woman the gatherer: In Man-the-Hunter, men are the providers, the authorities and the culture-builders whereas women provide babies and are provided for. In Woman-the-Gatherer, both sexes provide; both sexes build culture and social organization -- though often in different ways; and both sexes may or may not share power and authority. Here, the issue is that in feminist perspectives, there is nothing natural and inevitable about male dominance. Where and why it exists or doesn't exist is something that needs to be explained and cannot be taken for granted. In the feminist models, women are part and parcel of the social fabric; they are actors and there cannot be any understanding of production or the economy without them.

I'd like to end with a conclusion that comes from my reading of women's changing position in society at large. Changing economic circumstances and women's awareness of them is leading to a grassroots challenge to these core cultural myths. The "normal" or typical woman today and tomorrow can expect to work for wages most of her life, and to put in an additional shift of unpaid labor (in the home), and to face a growing likelihood that she will support herself and her children on her own grossly inadequate income. As women's lives are being reshaped, as this half of humanity is bursting out of the myths that have constrained it for so long, they issue a challenge to theorists and academics: to develop ways of seeing that are in tune with the realities of their lives, and that illuminate change that can lead to equity and equality.

WORKSHOP REPORTS

WORKSHOP: CHANGE AND THE UNIVERSITY CULTURE

(Revised to incorporate comments of workshop leaders, Margaret Supplee Smith, Wake Forest University, and Carol Stoneburner, Guilford College.)

The workshop opened with a brief overview of the state of the art of mainstreaming women's studies into the traditional curriculum. Both administrative and faculty personnel were represented in this group of seven. Carol Stoneburner reported on the Sirow Conference on Integrating Women's Studies Into the Traditional Curriculum, a conference she attended in 1981. Using three reports from that conference (see resource directory for citations) she highlighted various issues related to mainstreaming. Of crucial importance to planning such a project are: 1) studying and working within the particular ethos, setting, rationale, etc., of your own school; 3) developing administrational support; 3) moving beyond soft money to institutionalize this effort; and 4) using a Women's Studies base to help define and sustain this effort. Mainstreaming was not seen as an alternative to a Women's Studies program but as an adjunct built along with it.

Curricular models were described. Some focus on integrating general education requirements, some are discipline based - like the Feminist Press project in American Literature. Some use a more diffuse approach with the rationales of (1) making curriculum more sensitive to needs of students and new scholarship on women, (2) equity education, (3) promotion or research.

Faculty Development strategies were discussed: (1) stressing long-term models; (2) short intense training programs with a revised course as end product; and (3) use of variety of strategies of conferences, symposia, study groups, etc., either on individual campuses or in consortia.

Discussion of rewards and resistance mentioned some of the following:

a. importance of financial rewards for faculty involved

b. intellectual stimulation and increased interaction with colleagues as a very important reward

c. positive effect on teaching

d. often leads to publication and better visibility

e. reward of participating in significant social change.

Margaret Smith gave a brief overview of recent conferences at Skidmore College and Stephens College. The broad topic of the Stephens conference was education of women for the future. It was clear from the papers and discussions there that a consensus has not been reached about the most appropriate curricula for women, particularly in the issue of humanities vs math/science/computer education. What happens to women trained in literature and the arts? Over a period of time? Is the lower value accorded the humanities a reflection of its innate value or because of its association with women? Should women adapt to the reality of the world today or work to change the criteria by which their attainments are considered "soft?"

The two workshop leaders then went into detail about their own efforts at mainstreaming women's studies on their respective campuses.

Smith presented the experience of the ad hoc committee for women's studies at Wake Forest as a case study of how to implement institutional change. She stressed the importance of designing your strategy to accommodate the identity and self-interest of the institution. Wake Forest, formerly an all-male, Baptist-affiliated, liberal arts institution, first admitted women in 1945. It began to consider the question of women's studies within its curriculum in 1982 on the initiative of a group of interested faculty. This ad hoc committee was able to design and have approved an interdisciplinary minor in women's studies by: 1) being sensitive to the religious, conservative character of the

institution in all dealings; 2) developing a broad base of support (37 committee members, 17 tenured, representing 15 departments); 3) structuring a program which reflected the institution's commitment to both humanities and the sciences in a liberal arts context; 4) emphasizing resources already in place, i.e. library holdings, existing courses, and in-house personnel; and 5) approaching women's studies as "academic" and "intellectually valid" rather than as "consciousness raising." Colleagues were introduced to the new scholarship on women by the ad hoc committee through sharing articles and bibliographies and engaging in one-to-one discussions. For example, the initial resistance of the curriculum committee (composed of all department heads) was moderated by having a subcommittee from that group discuss the proposed minor program with a subcommittee of the ad hoc committee in a less formal setting. By stressing common goals as scholar-teachers, the subcommittee defused both potential and real opposition. The Wake Forest model thus far has emphasized faculty initiative and efforts to create an environment sympathetic to women's studies; still to be realized is administrative support in terms of line-budget, staff position, and funding for faculty development programs.

Carol Stoneburner reported on ten years of work at Guilford College on incorporating the study of women throughout the curriculum. Although this has been the primary focus of this program (which is institutionalized in a very part-time position, with line-budget for program, and an appointed faculty committee), work has also gone forward to develop separate Women's Studies classes. Included in this interdisciplinary program of "intellectual consciousness raising" mostly for faculty and staff, but sometimes including students, have been: faculty study groups (12), conferences and symposia (4), lecture series and colloquia (7), individual lectures, speakers (8), sponsoring attendance for faculty at Women's Studies conferences (13), very small grants to faculty for Women's Studies projects (5), workshops (3), consultants (5),

Women's History celebrations (2), special issues of Guilford Review, the faculty journal (4), numerous newsletters and many formal and informal discussions with individual faculty and departments. About 80 percent of the faculty have participated (many with considerable involvement). Many have taken the initiative to significantly alter their syllabi. Some have responded more minimally. An interdisciplinary concentration (minor) with 14 different courses projected in the next 4 years is a secondary result.

Discussion in the workshop then focused on the issues of being change agents, with particular attention to differences of strategy based on size of college/university, and to finding allies within particular institutions. One observation was that perhaps change was more easily achieved at Guilford and Wake Forest because of their relatively small size in comparison to larger schools, like UNC-G, which have much more complex and entrenched systems to penetrate.

WORKSHOP: WOMEN, THE NOVEL AND THE SYLLABUS - CONFRONTING STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

(Edited to include comments of Cynthia L. Caywood, Wake Forest University, and Gary Ljungquist, Salem College. Other workshop leaders were Gillian Overing and Mark Reynolds, both of Wake Forest University.)

Our workshop on "Women, the Novel, and the Syllabus - Confronting Student Expectations," was based on our experiences as teachers at relatively conservative, small, religiously affiliated colleges. We attempted to work from the premises offered by keynote speaker Elizabeth Minnich on the meaning of "human" in the humanities and focused both on mainstreaming women writers into traditional novel courses and on teaching the more conventional novel syllabus from a feminist perspective. The participants in the group were a diversified lot, some from technical colleges, others from four year schools, some students of the novel as we are, others interested in poetry or drama, and others devoted to the teaching of composition.

We began the workshop with introductions and with inquiries about the status of women's studies at each of the participants' institutions. We recounted our successes and failures with establishing such programs at Wake Forest and Salem College and then moved into discussion of the questions we had posed for ourselves. After distributing a sample of the "allowed authors" list that governs the structure of introductory literature survey courses at Wake Forest (its limitations all too apparent in the absence of any woman writer except for George Eliot from the British writers list), we discussed ways of addressing those limitations. Mark Reynolds passed out copies of a passage from Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter and offered questions that could open up into a feminist reading. Gary Ljungquist did the same for Zola's Nana; Gillian Overing discussed approaches to Hardy, and in response to

questions from participants, ventured into approaches to Milton. I followed with a discussion of Swift. We debated the value of such an approach, and we as leaders suggested that not only could a feminist perspective be conjoined as an adjunct or counterpoint to more traditional approaches, but that it deserved its place alongside those approaches. We next discussed introducing women writers into traditional syllabi. What to do with those women writers who have been designated as major was briefly discussed. More controversial was the question of how to handle a secondary woman writer. We considered the value of including such a writer to the exclusion of one recognized to be of greater importance and ultimately got involved in a discussion of how we determine value and importance of writers. What we might be categorizing as second-rate is second-rate only according to a taught set of values. This question and the need to develop a different set of absolutes, or at least to question the old ones, provoked the most controversy. We finished by quickly suggesting some ways of introducing a feminist perspective into composition, and by distributing a bibliography of helpful secondary material.

The four workshop leaders disagreed on the success of the workshop. Both Overing and Ljungquist felt it was quite successful and that important questions were raised and answered. Reynolds and I (Caywood) were a bit less sanguine. Meeting all the needs of the participants, given their widely varied backgrounds and interests, was, of course, impossible. But I felt that had we known more about them, we could have designed a workshop that better addressed their needs. For example, the discussion about implementing women's studies programs wasn't necessary; more discussion about adopting a feminist perspective in composition and introductory language courses was. We encountered more skepticism about the value of women's studies and a feminist perspective than had been anticipated. Without being evangelical, we should have addressed the "why" query

more directly before proceeding with the "how." Our eventual confrontation over methods of evaluating authors was most fruitful; that issue warrented even closer examination than we gave it. On the whole, given the differences in the backgrounds of workshop participants and their different perspectives on women's studies, I felt the workshop was a reasonable success despite the problems.

The conclusion voiced by Dr. Gary Ljungquist:

The wide variety of experience represented among the participants made for a lively and varied discussion. The workshop focused specifically on issues raised at the previous sessions, and as such provided an integrated conclusion to the conference. However, I should offer a few criticisms:

1) Four leaders all of whom knew each other posed some problems. Our remarks were focused at an audience whose experience in Women's Studies was probably beyond that of most of the participants. Also, four leaders did not allow for sufficient response and comment from the other participants.

2) A more general, less specifically focused topic, perhaps one dealing with English Composition courses might provide a more fruitful common ground to participants. From a number of participants, we got the response, "How lucky you are to be able to do this, but I could never do it given the nature of my institution."

WORKSHOP: WOMEN WRITERS -- AN OLD CONVENTION OR A NEW AESTHETIC?

(Edited to include comments of workshop leaders, Linda Bragg, UNC-Greensboro, and Mary DeShazer, Wake Forest.)

In our workshop, "Women Writers -- An Old Convention or a New Aesthetic?" we focused on several questions. Is there such a thing as a "female Aesthetic?" Might "Feminist Aesthetic" be a more appropriate term? In either case, what characteristics define such an aesthetic, and how can a definition and understanding of this aesthetic benefit us as scholars in women's studies and teachers of readers of women writers?

Our activities consisted of four segments: a brief introduction by the co-leaders, in which we gave short statements of our views on the topic and raised the above questions; small group discussions of the concepts "female aesthetic" and "feminist aesthetic;" group reports on their conclusions and a follow-up discussion; and, a brief examination of writings by several women, as part of the effort to define and delincate a woman's aesthetic.

For most of us, I believe, the most challenging and enlightening parts of this experience were the small group sessions and the discussion which followed, both of which yielded an interesting range of responses. "I'm not a feminist; I'm a humanist," claimed one teacher of women and literature, "I teach women writers in order to help us learn more about ourselves as people." When several participants agreed with this first speaker, a European graduate student countered, "But isn't it important that we teach women writers, or read them, from a feminist perspective -- as Elizabeth Minnich said, out of a concern that old paradigms be challenged and reevaluated?" These two comments led us to a lively discussion of the responsibilities of students and teachers of women's studies.

Other issues which emerged from this exchange included the double bind of

the woman writer in her quest for creative identity; the "triple bind" of the minority woman writer, whose experience of oppression differs significantly, we concluded, from that of most Caucasian writers; the ways in which women writers define, confront, and strive to attain power; and, the need among women writers for community and affirmation -- of themselves and their art (as Adrienne Rich says, the need to integrate "the energy of creation and the energy of relation").

Unfortunately, we had only a few minutes to examine the handouts of primary sources. But we talked briefly about the characteristics of a female aesthetic (which, we think, we finally agreed on as the desired term!) as manifested in the writings of Toni Morrison, Ntozake Shange, Maya Angelou, June Jordan, Emily Diskinson, Kate Chopin, Margaret Atwood, and Adrienne Rich.

Mary DeShazer concluded:

"I was most excited by the energy and imagination with which this group of thirteen women discussed issues of women and oppression, women and the political, and women writers and creative identity. I was most surprised and concerned by the discomfort with which several participants seemed to regard the terms "feminist" and "feminism." For me, it is both impossible and undesirable to approach the issue of "Women Writers -- An Old Convention or a New Aesthetic?" from any perspective which would deny its roots in and debt to feminism and feminist scholarship.

Clearly the same is true for Linda Bragg, who commented:

Our agenda is based on the belief that mainstreaming the female aesthetic requires recognizing that one is faced not only with convincing others that courses should include information by and about women, but that the course content will spring from a different set of "first principles" and that this will be in conflict with a traditional mind-set.

WORKSHOP: WOMEN'S HISTORY OR WOMEN IN HISTORY?

(Edited to combine the comments of William Chafe, Duke University, and Kathleen Berkely, UNC-Wilmington.)

With fifteen people representing diverse institutions attending this workshop, we spent some time at the beginning trying to find a common ground for discussion. Bill Chafe opened up the session with a brief overview of the development of women's history as a field of historic inquiry. His remarks centered on the transformation of historical questions brought about by using the experience of women as a departure point. He contended that women's history has been in the forefront of making social history a dominant field in American historical scholarship. Carol Smith-Rosenberg's work on women's culture, Gerda Lerner and Ann Scott's studies of women's voluntary associations, and other works, have raised new questions of history and suggested new methods of searching for the answers. The emphasis on ethnicity, sexuality, demography in women's history, for example, have subsequently become mainstream historical subjects which would not have been given any consideration before the 1960's.

There followed discussion on the division between those who advocate integrating women into the mainstream curriculum and those who advocate separate women's history and women's studies courses. Kathleen Berkely raised a series of questions for discussion including the following: What are the issues involved in "mainstreaming" women into history courses? What methods are used to integrate the scholarship on women? When is it "natural" to "insert" women without making it seem as if women's issues are an afterthought? By "adding in women," are we implying that there is something called history which is separate from the experiences of women? Is it possible that by "mainstreaming women's history" into "regular history" we are re-shaping the context and meaning of the discipline? How has women's history broadened our understanding of the

past? She gave a number of examples from her own teaching of ways to include women within a basic survey course. Much of the discussion concentrated on the difference between American and non-American history in terms of resources, ways to include women in Western civilization courses, and whether using the "add and stir" technique could be an entry point for doing more later with women's history.

Discussion of the above questions was fast paced and probing. Some of the problems mentioned involved how one reshapes a course to make women an integral part of the course. What does one have to "leave out" when the decision is made to include women? What sources (texts, monographs, novels and films) are available? Is there a need for specialty courses on women's history if we successfully mainstream?

Perhaps the most useful part of the discussion dealt with the use of fiction and other non-historical materials as a way of levering people out of a traditional framework and getting them to think about history as something experienced and shaped by women. The emphasis on fiction seemed to be shared by diverse constituencies in the room, so that those teaching ancient history, medieval history, and 20th century American history were all able to report and compare experiences.

In particular, it seemed that the use of fiction of and about Black women was a useful point of entry for studying the intersection of gender and race. Examples of writers such as Alice Walker and Toni Morrison were used to illustrate ways of tapping fiction to get "into" history and to supplement more traditional historical sources, especially in cases where those more traditional sources are scarce.

A final issue in discussion was the personnel question -- that is, the problem that in many locations the very historians with the most interest and

training in women's history are those most affected by this period of particularly scarce resources in the university. Thus, a quandry has emerged: those historians with tenure have, in general, received their training when women's history was either an illegitimate path of inquiry or a road entirely closed off. For young scholars facing a serious threat of job insecurity, there is considerable pressure to do research in areas other than women's history. The bind is whether to push for the integration of women's history or take up "safer" subjects, knowing that if you don't push women's history forward and advocate its incorporation into social history, even your own work won't be taken seriously.

All in all, it was a fine group and an excellent discussion. The main weakness of the panel was the lack of expertise on the part of the workshop coordinators in Western Civilization and Asian history. Because the panel attracted people wih a wide variety of field interests, we believe that the panel would have been strengthened if both coordinators had not been specialists in American history.

WORKSHOP: BLACK WOMEN'S STUDIES - INTEGRATING WOMEN OF COLOR INTO THE CURRICULUM

(Submitted by Ann Carver, UNC-Charlotte.)

There were 12 participants in the Black Women's Studies Workshop. After introducing herself, each woman stated one question about Black Women's Studies she brought to the workshop. The basic questions asked were:

1) How do I get a course focusing on Black women into the curriculum of traditional departments? For example, how do I get a Black Women's Literature course into the English department curriculum?

2) How can we make the study of Black women an integral part of the curriculum in established courses? How can we reeducate the faculty? How can we effectively make them understand: "I am miseducated; I must go back and educate myself about Black women (writers, historical figures, etc.) in order to provide my students -- Black and white -- with an accurate view of my subject?"

3) How do I handle expectations that I continue to cover the "masters" in a traditional course when I add a substantial treatment of Black women's contributions? How do I avoid "token" treatment of Black women?

4) How can I reconcile the differences between the priorities and focus of the predominantly white-oriented feminist educators and scholarship and my priorities and concerns, as a Black woman student/teacher/scholar?

Before addressing these specific concerns about Black Women's Studies, we focused on discussion of the term itself. What do we mean by "Black Women's Studies?" Does it mean the same thing to all of us?

We basically agreed with the definition articulated by Barbara Smith and Gloria Hull in <u>But Some of Us Are Brave</u> (pp. xxi):

> Only a Black <u>and</u> feminist analysis can sufficiently comprehend the materials of Black Women's studies . . .
> Naming and describing our experience are important initial steps, but

not alone sufficient to get us where we need to go. A descriptive approach to the lives of Black women, a "great Black women" in history or literature approach, or any traditional male-identified approach will not result in intellectually groundbreaking or politically transforming work. We cannot change out lives by teaching solely about "exceptions" to the ravages of white-male oppression. Only through exploring the experience of supposedly "ordinary" Black women whose "unexceptional" actions enable us and the race to survive, will we be able to begin to develop an overview and an analytical framework for understanding the lives of Afro-American women.

Courses that focus on issues which concretely and materially affect Black women are ideally what Black women's studies/feminist studies should be about.

However, several participants felt that, at their institutions, the struggle of simply getting Black women included in the curriculum at all was the major task at the present.

As that goal is pursued, the necessity of establishing an analytical framework can be addressed more directly and effectively. We agreed that there is no blanket strategy that fits all situations. Rather, the realities of each institution must be faced in developing different strategeies to achieve our common goals. That means different approaches and timetables. It also points up the need for a network across the state which keeps us in touch with the larger effort and offers wider support while we work in our isolated schools.

The workshop participants then divided into discussion groups (3-4 women in each) to examine in detail the specific questions identified at the beginning of the session.

The groups examined each question in terms of: (a) options and their implications, and (b) specific strategies.

The groups then shared their perceptions, questions and suggestions with each other. Certainly, more questions were identified than solutions found. But, many ideas and insights were shared in the discussion.

Among possible strategies for change discussed by the groups are the following:

1) Obtain grant money to give course reductions to faculty members in

various departments to (a) reeducate themselves, and (b) redesign one of their established courses to include the Black Women's dimension as an integral part of the course, not as a "token" addition.

2) Revise faculty evaluation forms to include evidence of efforts to include women, and specifically Black women, materials, and perspective into their courses and research.

3) On a departmental level, sponsor discussion groups in which faculty examine: (a) what is being taught in their courses; (b) possible revisions in their courses, including how to incorporate Black women; and (c) plans for specific changes.

4) Women's Studies, Black Studies, along with other departments (e.g. English, History, Sociology, Philosophy) sponsor a symposium to facilitate the reeducation of faculty in those departments to help them transform their courses. For example, bring in Black Women's Studies scholars from the particular disciplines sponsoring the symposium to share research, bibliographies, sample syllabi, and further reeducation opportunities information, such as summer institutes, and post-graduate courses.

5) Get the Southern Association and other accrediting bodies to include women and Blacks in their curriculum requirements.

Finally, workshop participants shared resources, bibliographies, and names of consultants -- such as Dr. Bertha Maxwell, Chairperson of African and Afro-American Studies at UNC-Charlotte. Marie Hart and Gayle Wulk of Suite Five Video Productions explained how we can produce our own video oral history and visual anthropology collections utilizing the Black women and institutions in our own communities.

The most essential resource, we agreed, and the most fundamental material for transforming the curriculum, are the "ordinary" women whose lives are

"unexceptional" (But Some of Us Are Brave).

We can begin the transformation of established courses by including Black women's oral history projects, in which our students interview and get to know the women in our community. We can share the teaching of our courses with non-academic Black women who have knowledge, expertise, and life experience that carry us beyond the limited resources of the academy. We can develop the conceptual framework necessary to discover all the kinds of knowledge we can tap when we move beyond the resources legitimized by the white male canon and disciplinary divisions.

The participants in the workshop concluded by proposing a strategy for initiating a support network for those of us working in Black Women's Studies in North Carolina. We propose to share syllabi and resources in a periodic mailing among members of our Conference Workshop.

WORKSHOP: A WOMEN'S MORALITY? VALUES, SOCIALIZATION AND A MORAL CODE

(Edited to include comments of Mary Wakeman, UNC-G, and Helen Trobian, Bennett College)

We began with 13 participants around the circle getting acquainted through giving their names and saying why they were interested in the topic. Then we broke into three groups to discuss "moral dilemmas" (as presented in prepared descriptions of situations that call for difficult decisions). Instructions were intentionally held to a minimum in this activity, which caused a bit of floundering. But, after ten minutes, the discussion groups reformed in the larger circle to give informal reports. This method encouraged give-and-take between groups. Back in the circle, a person from each group reported on the situations that had been discussed, and the considerations voiced in the discussion.

Many of the considerations were typical of the sorts of concerns women voice, the concerns that led Carol Gilligan to write her book In a Different Voice (Harvard 1982). This book examines the ways women approach moral problems, how the differences between women's and men's approaches are rooted in the different developmental tasks set for boys and girls by our culture (and as a result of the fact that both are cared for, as infants, by women), and how women's moral development has been misunderstood by measuring it against standards based on studies of men's experience.

Dr. Wakeman summarized what Gilligan had done and presented some of the ideas that she had found most important: that men define morality in terms of rights and non-interference with others, and women define it in terms of the responsibility to care for others. Misunderstandings arise between them, as men fear the entrapment of intimacy and feel secure in hierarchical structures,

because they assume that everyone has an equal chance and that position is arrived at fairly, with everyone playing by the rules. Women fear the isolation of distinguishing themselves, and feel secure in the center of a network of relationships where people with differing needs are cared about.

"To the extent that women perceive themselves as having no choice, they correspondingly excuse themselves from the responsibility that decision entails. . . . The notion that virtue for women lies in self-sacrifice has complicated the course of women's development by pitting the moral issue of goodness against the adult questions of responsibility and choice." Thus, it is unfeminine to grow up.

If relationships are primary, power can be used to empower others who have unequal access to resources. When individual achievement is primary, power tends to be used to keep people in their place in the hierarchy. A more adequate model of human development shows moral maturity for women to mean including themselves as of equal importance with others in weighing their responsibilities (a problem voiced by several participants), and for men, to mean acknowledging their own interdependency and the fact of differences, in human life.

We related these findings to the (male) critical misunderstanding of Emily Dickinson that Elizabeth Phillips demonstrated in her lecture; people were encouraged to speak about their own experiences in light of these ideas. One remarked on how differences in leadership style are related to differing attitudes toward relationship and hierarchy. Another commented on the fact that she and her male colleague have different understandings of their responsibilities as therapists. Nearly everyone contributed to the conversation in some way, and many remarked that it was affirming to hear others voice concerns similar to their own, and to see how the nonrecognition of women's ways of thinking about moral problems has undermined our confidence in our own judgment.

WORKSHOP: THE MYTH OF UNIVERSAL INEQUALITY AND DOMESTICITY - NEW QUESTIONS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

(Edited to include the comments of Holly F. Mathews, Eastern Carolina University and Sandra Morgen, Duke-UNC Women's Studies Research Center)

On March 18, 1983, Sandra Morgen and Holly Mathews co-led a workshop entitled, "The Myth of Universal Inequality and Domesticity - New Questions in Anthropology." Our goal in the workshop was to acquaint participants with theoretical developments in anthropological scholarship on women and to discuss ways of integrating such materials into traditional humanities courses. Consequently, we divided our session into two parts, each an hour in length, in order to discuss these topics. We had twelve participants of whom only two had had any formal anthropological training. The remainder came from other disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. In order to best meet the needs of these scholars, we began the workshop with a brief review of women's studies in anthropology.

Anthropologists have traditionally examined life in other cultures in order to compare and understand the relationship between the biological and sociological determinants of behavior. In the process, anthropologists have come to see life in Western society from a different perspective, and many of the race and class biases affecting interpretation of Western life have been exposed. Yet the exposure of gender biases has been more difficult for anthropology in part because anthropologists often saw, in other cultures, what they wanted or expected to see. Consequently descriptions of gender roles in other cultures often reflected a recreation of the gender role structure of Western society. In particular, early anthropologists reported the existence of universal sexual asymmetry; a universal division of culture into domestic and public domains; the universal association of women with the domestic sphere because of their

role in child-bearing; and a rather homogeneous picture of women's powerlessness in all cultures.

Anthropologists seemed to make such universalist observations because they either accepted or did not explicitly explore the assumption that women were subordinate to men cross-culturally. Even some of the earliest feminist anthropologists accepted, albeit often tacitly, that assumption and focused their work on searching for reasons for such universal subordination. In recent years, however, feminist anthropologists have engaged in processes of critical self reflection, extensive field research, and theoretical reinterpretation; in so doing, they have discovered many biases that clouded observations and perceptions of women's roles cross-culturally. Both workshop leaders gave examples of the role of critical self-refection in reinterpretation of their own data on women's roles. Holly showed how her original acceptance of the public-private distinction made it difficult for her to see women playing powerful public roles in a Mexican village; Sandi discussed ways that her earlier analysis of a feminist health collective suffered from a gender bias emerging from the dichotomization of thought and feeling, subjectivity and objectivity, rationality and irrationality characteristic of Western thought. There was some discussion about how such self-reflection could be a useful critical tool in mainstreaming Women's Studies -- through using it to uncover biases and unexplored assumptions in traditional textbooks and perspectives.

Finally, we summarized the feminist revisions of the ethnographic record which suggest that: 1) status is not a unitary construct and may in fact be influenced by a number of independent variables in different cultures; 2) women are not universally subordinate to men but exhibit great variability in roles, cross-culturally; 3) the domestic/public dichotomy is of limited explanatory power because its static, dichotomous structure often steers us away from a com-

parison of the relationships that occur between men and women in specific historical and sociological contexts and because it does not hold up empirically under the scrutiny of feminist fieldworkers; and finally, 4) beliefs (ideology) about gender roles in a culture are not necessarily indicative of gender role behavior within that culture.

A lively discussion of these points ensued and participants particularly questioned the utility of the domestic/public dichotomy and probed for ways to move beyond it analytically. The group explored different ways of conceptualizing male/female relations in both our own and other cultures. At the end of the first hour, we turned our attention to techniques for mainstreaming these ideas into courses in the humanities. We stressed the importance of self-reflection and the reinterpretation of theoretical assumptions in order to bring a feminist perspective to traditional materials. Participants noted that in many colleges curriculum transformation could only happen after separate units and courses on women had been instituted. We suggested ways of adding such materials on women and distributed lists of anthropological ethnographies that focus on women's roles; lists of texts with a feminist perspective; and lists of films which emphasize women's roles. We also discussed ways of using women's experiences in discussing more general course topics and ways of using gender in course assignments and evaluations.

Sandra Morgen then presented her experiences in reorganizing a traditional introductory course in anthropology. Instead of organizing the course around the traditionally accepted subfields of anthropology, she focused the course on an exploration of inequality (including gender, racial, class, and other factors which structure inequality cross-culturally). Using the concepts and methods of anthropology, she examined the validity of various explanations for inequalities in particular cultures, and cross-culturally. In this course, students were

introduced to the basic concepts and methods of anthropology, and Sandra was able to make some of the concerns and perspectives of Women's Studies central to the themes and organization of the course.

Participants noted that such creative course designs requires the cooperation of colleagues and administrators. They then reported on a number of different attempts to re-educate faculty in a feminist perspective at their own institutions. These attempts included weekly discussion groups on feminist literature; discussions between faculty and students on these issues; and the raising of feminist issues in faculty committees on recruitment, curriculum, and evaluation.

WORKSHOP: WOMEN'S STUDIES TEN YEARS LATER, A SPECIALTY OR A PERSPECTIVE?

(Edited to include comments of Maggie McFadden, Appalachian State University, and Inzer Byers, Salem College.)

This workshop was not as well-attended (with only four participants) as it might have been for a maximum sharing of problems, ideas, and successes. Elizabeth Minnich attended and was very helpful with her response to an introductory question about the sciences: she commented that no other fields are so exclusively white, upper-class male, and no other fields are more dependent on government and the military-industrial complex. Can these disciplines seriously claim to be "objective," disinterested, apolitical, and therefore exempt from the criticism leveled at the social sciences, she asked.

Inzer Byers began the discussion with a look at her own experience in teaching women's history. She asserted that, although "specialty vs. perspective" is a false dichotomy, we must be careful not to abandon the old perspectives too quickly; in this context, she gave an example of a new textbook in American history which eschews traditional political history for social and women's history.

Maggie McFadden extrapolated, in her remarks, on a delineation that Gerda Lerner makes in "Placing Women in History." She noted that we can envision a continuum of the ways that women can be brought into the curriculum. Some of these are noted below:

1. Adding the women. Noting that "man" does not include us all, that we've been studying "men's studies" all our lives, we begin to find and add "women worthies" to course material; we do compensatory history or literature.

2. Contribution history. We go beyond simple additions by beginning to study women's contributions to, their status in, and their oppression by, male-defined society; we see their effect on a particular institution or movement, but continue to judge by traditional standards, standards appro-

priate to men.

3. History of the majority of the human race. We take another step by asking questions that would bring women into view in new ways. What would _____ be like if it were seen through the eyes of women and ordered by values they define? We may want to challenge traditional periodization and categories. If we ask, "What happened to the link between sexuality and reproduction?" or "What happened to the link between child-bearing and child-rearing?" at every stage we will bring very different information and values to light.

4. A new universal understanding of what it means to be human. A holistic history, a synthesis of the tradition with the information on a majority of humanity. The "tradition," history as we know it, turns out to be just "pre-history."

The vision of the single eye of patriarchy cannot be corrected by the second eye of woman alone (by closing the first eye). Only when we see with "doubled vision" (to use Joan Kelly's phrase) can we correct for depth, blind spots, and peripheral vision. Only when our new eyes see from within the perspective of the majority of humanity, can we really envision the whole world.

A list was handed out entitled, "Questions to Bring Women Into View." These queries have been found helpful in transforming traditional courses:

1. How is the new scholarship on women finding its way into your curriculum?

2. Where on this continuum of bringing women into view might your institution be found? Or, perhaps, this continuum gives a false linearity of the way things are happening -- maybe things are happening at several levels at once, or the direction is reversed?

3. What are the politics at your institution with regard to women's studies? Is it viewed as a specialty or a perspective? Both? Is "mainstreaming" a good word now? Can it do what separate women's studies courses can never do?

4. What are your biggest problems? Successes?

The workshop concluded with free-flowing discussion of these questions for 45 minutes.

AFTERWORDS

(by Sandra Morgen and Judith White)

Afterwards, after the conference, the evaluations and the flurry of work in the area of transforming the curriculum proved that the conference had been a valuable experience for the many different kinds of participants. Since Elizabeth Minnich did such a good job of keynoting the conference, let us use part of her evaluation to preface these afterwords, and to communicate the flavor of the evaluations we received from the participants in the conference:

> I have done conferences sponsored and funded by state Humanities Committees before, but I don't know of one that impressed me as much. Usually there is an implicit assumption that we know what the Humanities are; that they are in and of themselves valuable for all people regardless of the circumstances in the form they take in the Academy; and that scholars presenting scholarship to others as the scholars practice it professionally automatically 'reaches' the audience. All of those assumptions are somewhat problematic, of course. Scholars are far too used to speaking to other scholars to be able to shift easily into language accessible to others, and "the Humanities" as academic disciplines are not necessarily co-extensive with the Humanities as modes of knowing, valuing, understanding. By being willing to sponsor considerations of the Humanities themselves, this conference made the whole tradition in fact more human, I believe. Just as feminist scholars are trying to open up the tradition so that more may find what is valuable in it, and contribute to a renewed vision of what it could be, the Humanities Committee and the Research Center and the University sponsors are trying to open doors. We share a notion that what is valuable in the Humanities can withstand discussion, ought to be shared, and must be opened to new learning if the tradition is to continue vibrant and alive.
>
> My sense of the conference was that those of us who participated and contributed were indeed enlivened . . . I know a number of people spoke to me about highly personal reactions they had, all moving and of the sort central to what we have all always wanted the Humanities to elicit. I also encountered some doubts and worries and a few irritations. I take those reactions to mean that people were touched in ways that matter to them, and regard them as all to the good. Value-laden discussions ought not to be smooth and easy, after all. They matter too much.

So, let's get on to some of these hard questions . . .

When, in the midst of a conference where people have a great deal of shared understanding and mutual commitment to a difficult intellectual task, certain questions recur often and with considerable intensity, we can conclude that

these questions represent central veins that need to be mined. Our sense is that there were three overriding issues which came up over and over again, albeit in different forms:

1) Standards -- how do we develop standards that grow out of a commitment to both equity and excellence? And, right now, as we are doing this, how do we justify (to ourselves and others) leaving traditional material (certain authors, traditional theories, etc.) out of courses to make room for the new scholarship on women?

2) The deep rootedness of the problem -- once you take seriously the perspectives of feminist theory and the vast amount of new research coming out of Women's Studies, how do you deal with the depth of the cracks implied for the nature of truth in one's discipline? How do you go back to question some of the most fundemental assumptions and "truths" in your field? And how do you communicate with others who refuse to acknowledge those cracks, in order to reconstruct sciences and humanities that reflect these new perspectives?

3) The perennial "either-or" -- we continue to debate whether to pursue curriculum transformation or to put our energies into refining the research, the theories, the perspectives of Women's Studies: this is especially a problem in light of current economic and political realities.

This afterward will consider each of these issues briefly in the interests of stimulating more debate and continuing the process, begun at the conference, of taking very seriously some of the most basic premises and assumptions that guide our work.

Measuring Excellence and Developing Standards to Judge the Quality of Work

The question of measuring excellence came up in two general ways in both keynote addresses, and in the workshops. First, the question of standards for judging excellence, e.g. of the work of artists and writers, emerged as participants discussed the inclusion of works of women humanists. Second, the issue

of measuring the excellence or accuracy of theories and research consumed much of the discussion of the process of faculty development.

Regarding the controversial issue of standards, what we heard most often concerned the need to question the canon that is accepted today and develop a plurality of standards that would recognize the diversity of people's experiences, modes of expression, and history. Students of literature argued that present standards of excellence hardly even admit the existence of some of the genres used by women and people of color (oral traditions, diaries, slave narratives, etc.), let alone particular works within those genres. Historians and anthropologists questioned the standards of scientific inquiry that are clearly inappropriate for meaningful research in such new and sensitive areas as the social context of sexuality or the relationship between men and women within the family and without. Unfortunately, although the frustration of those calling for a plurality of standards is warranted, and a more relativistic set of standards would in fact permit the humanities to do what Elizabeth Minnich calls for -- helping us all explore our own humanity -- we must realize that for many in traditional academia, this sounds like an apology for second rate work and theories.

Knowing this, we don't have to move away from our relativistic stance. Instead we must admit that much work must be done to create viable "relativistic" standards; and, we have to undertake this task as a serious intellectual challenge. When we say that the standards that have been used for centuries to evaluate the novel or poetry are white, privileged and male biased, we have to be able to show concretely how these standards have served to exclude work that is quite different but not necessarily of less value, and how taking seriously a much wider variety of works allows us to evolve standards of excellence that are both more inclusive and more historically and socially appropriate to the multiple social realities of an era. Put another way, intellectually we can put our demands for fairness and inclusiveness in the context of the overriding importance

of understanding the relationship between knowledge and the historical and social realities of a period. When we can show just how relativistic are the present standards of excellence, we can all consider the question of moving in the direction of either refinement of relativistic standards or (we doubt this, but put it in, in view of knowing that we can't yet know what we will know after we complete this task) the development of "absolutist" standards that are more inclusive.[1]

In response to these questions, we heard at the conference what we hear so often said by detractors of Women's Studies: until you have developed these new standards, how can you evaluate this female diary or that piece of poetry or that kind of qualitative research? Well, we can, as we learn to appreciate more how the evolving literature in Women's Studies informs our understanding of people's experiences and the constraints under which they worked. We don't say, "this is it," this is our final list of the important women writers in history, or the ultimate understanding of how sexual ideology reinforces structures of power within the family. (Moreover, this kind of response by opponents reminds me of what we heard so much during the political unrest of the sixties and seventies - don't tear down a system, even a system with faults, until you can be sure you have something that is going to be much better. While we can all understand the impulse toward order and structure in those who echo this view, we can also understand this kind of rhetoric as an apology for weakness in the status quo - be it the social structure, the political system, or the canon of literary excellence!) Rather, we are in the same boat as the rest of our colleagues in the humanities: adrift in a constantly changing sea of political and social realities, in which we are trying to see those things that stand out as the essence of what it means to be human. Of course, the difference is that we know

[1] So as not to appear naive, we should add that, until there is a great deal more equity in social, political and economic structures of this society, it is highly unlikely that this intellectual task will be possible, at least on a broad scale.

we are adrift, and paddling together towards some shore. They seem to think they have reached that shore, and thus have erected grand edifices marked with labels such as "truth," "knowledge," and "the pursuit of humanity."

On the question of standards, we must further take care to recognize and reject the rhetoric of the "double standard" (i.e. the model which says that, if you let Blacks and women in -- to structures of power, to the hallowed ground of social theory, to the canon of great literature -- for a time that will mean having to accept inferior quality, but over time it will lead to both greater equality and similar quality). Those of us in Women's Studies don't tend to believe this. While we acknowledge that oppression and discrimination have resulted in many fewer women poets, sculptors, anthropologists, we should never lose sight of our primary point: it is not the past quality of women's work that is the central issue, but the political, economic and social contexts in which their work was and is (un)recognized and devalued.[2]

The Deep-rootedness of the Problem: Or, How to Tell Those Who are Standing with Their Fingers in the Dam that the Foundation is Weak and May Fall

This issue is part of another question of practical significance which I will mention here, but not dwell on: how do we in Women's Studies deal with the reality that for now anyhow, on most campuses, curriculum transformation will be less likely than curriculum reform? Let me return to that after looking at what I believe to be a deeper but related problem - that once you take seriously the critique Women's Studies presents, not only of the Humanities but also of the

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[2] We believe a case can be made that when women have much less responsibility for the nurturing of children and other adults, when there are serious changes in the sexual division of labor, that women will have more unfettered time to produce more great works. However, we also believe that we can argue that when men have more responsibility for nurturance and daily life tasks, the quality of their work will improve - it is much more likely to resonate with the reality that guides all of our lives - that we are humans and that part of being human is essentially the emotional and practical work of nurturance.

Natural and Social Sciences, it often becomes difficult to accept some of the most basic premises of our disciplines; and, that creates problems for both teaching and collegiality.

In her keynote address, Karen Sacks defined some of those problems by speaking of the core explanatory myths which are accepted by anthropologists as ethnographic truths or scientifically demonstrable "facts." For example, the role of "Man the hunter" in human evolution is suggested to be such a myth, as is the axiom that human nature leads to pervasive hierarchies and inequalities in all societies, that such hierarchies are inevitable and therefore functional. What Karen was getting at was that feminist theory has struck at the core of anthropology's truths about human nature. It has questioned not merely the kinds of data used to develop theories or interpretation of data, but also the very assumptions that have gone uninvestigated which serve as the shaky foundation on which the dam is built.

The problems that emerge from this are multiple and complex. First, one is labeled an extremist when one talks of shaky foundations. We have been told ten times if we have been told once, don't bring up the whole critique of the assumptions of the discipline with this group of faculty or they'll stop listening to your <u>really</u> valid points about the exclusion of women from much of the ethnographic record or from the theories which purport to explain women's cultural experiences. That may sound like practical advice. But the problem is that, in order to make the strongest case for theoretical or curricular revision (even), the deeper issues (e.g. of standards, or evaluation of research excellence, etc.) need to be raised. So we find ouselves in a double bind. Either you put your case for the inclusion of women poets or research on women's modes of resistance in the context of the shameful inadequacies of current standards of excellence to include the majority of humankind, and thereby risk "alienation," "ire," and

"not listening," or you don't, and the faculty you are reaching out to will revise their research or curricula without those understandings. The worst (?) possible result of this latter is the cooptation of the curriculum transformation movement. Many people fear cooptation because it would mean winning a few slots for women in courses without changing the way that women's experiences, modes of expression, etc., are understood, and without attention to the implications of that understanding for the way the humanities strive to allow each of us to better understand ourselves and others.

I think that the recognition of this double bind feeds other very real constraints on those of us running the gauntlet of curriculum transformation. These constraints exist because many of us are junior faculty, independent scholars or graduate students, at a time of increasingly scarce resources, including tenure, publication opportunities, and research monies; because there is often either no or only token administrative support for these tasks; and, because we are often highly isolated within our departments or even within our campuses, and thus have limited resources and people to work together with on these projects.

One thing that will help us with this double bind is to recognize our allies in this movement - to know that women are not the only ones who have been excluded from the humanities, nor the only ones trying "to get in." In the area of the arts, for example, we know that people of color, non-Westerners, working people, and political artists (those whose creative energies are harnessed to the goal of exposing the faults in the system), have been excluded - men and women alike. There has been altogether too little intellectual cross-fertilization between Women's Studies and these other groups, both in the area of research and in curriculum development. To the extent that we can work together we are more likely to be able to expose the exclusiveness Elizabeth Minnich talked about, and elevate these issues to a more central place in the contemporary development of our

respective humanities specialties.

Another partial route out of the double bind is to try not to get caught in its either/or structure: either radical revsion of the curriculum, or tepid, "add women and stir" techniques. This means that we can neither be purists, condemning those who don't take the task quite as we do, nor can we avoid mutual evaluation of our various efforts either within our own classrooms or within our department/universities. Just as the "holier-than-thou" attitude will get us into trouble, so will acceptance of the veil of individualistic "this is what I know best and feel comfortable with" attitudes. There is a middle ground that recognizes the difficulty of the intellectual task of curriculum transformation, and that sees it, therefore, as a collective endeavor with plenty of room for individual adaptation.

Perhaps most importantly, when we take seriously the deep-rootedness of the problem, we will also recognize our own stumbling along the path of change. For the many white women who have contributed to the construction of a white women's studies, the critiques by Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American women that point to this exclusiveness should be met not with guilt or defensiveness, but with an awareness of how deep and subtle are the ways of exclusiveness, how often they result from segregation and unfamiliarity rather than outright prejudice, how easy it is to accept the more superficial layers of the critique of feminist theory without even wanting to. But, in fact, motivation matters little -- what matters is being open to the experiences, research, and claims of us all, as diverse groups of women, so that we retain the kind of inclusive intellectual understanding we are asking the traditional practitioners of the humanities to take on, and so we can get on together with the task of finding out the truths about humanity we are searching for.

What that means, for example, is that as white women deal with the challenge

of making their own research and teaching more inclusive by race and class, as well as by gender, they can learn a great deal about the anxiety implicit in a lukewarm or hostile response by colleagues who are unreceptive to feminist theory or Women's Studies. Once we understand the difficulty of such an experience we may well be better strategists and models for the other faculty and administrators we seek to change.

From "Either-Or" to "Both-And"-- Competing or Cooperative Strategies for Strengthening Women's Studies

A friend recently told one of us about the statement of the Director of the NC Dance Theatre to a gathering of dancers and choreographers in the state. The Director said (to paraphrase), we are not in competition with each other as artists, there is room for the art of each of us, but we are in competition for scarce resources. His point was that we should be aware of the nature of our competition. We should realize, if we may add our opinions, that the winners and losers of that competition are winners and losers of grants, etc., but not necessarily of artistic quality. What that statement means to those of us in Women's Studies, is that we should look hard at our many debates about whether to pursue "mainstreaming" or curriculum reform or autonomous Women's Studies programs and courses, and see that such debates emerge from particular political and economic conditions (e.g. maldistributed resources). What makes these debates seem so heated, I believe, is that we sometimes confuse them with philosophical issues, elaborating our "sides" as if they were philosophical enemies instead of collaborators in the effort to change the Humanities so they become more accessible to more of us, and speak more truthfully to all of us.

In the interest of trying to provoke us beyond the either-or mentality, let us say several things. First, if we see and pursue curriculum transformation as an intellectual task, albeit one about which we need to have political savvy, it becomes not the stepsister of the more "interesting" or "important" new research

on women or Women's Studies courses,but an equally important task that involves both research and intellectual effort. Second, there is the matter of trying to share resources. One of the things to be learned from working in the Women's movement, and securing grants for various projects is that the priorities of funding agencies change and change quickly, so that just about the time, for example, that women's health clinics have gotten off the ground, the funding priorities change, and it's battered women's shelters that are "in" while the health clinics go begging, and either wither up or die or . . . Feminist institutions that have survived in anything like their original forms have had to figure out ways to use scarce resources for more than their intended purposes, to dovetail off each other, to recognize that their "time in the sun" is temporary, and must therefore be used to hook into what has come before and what (they anticipate) will come after.

Third, we should also try to understand how the changes going on in society today, changes which are intimately related to retrenchment and fiscal policy, are some of our biggest friends in our effort to achieve curriculum changes. What I mean is that, as Karen Sacks noted in her keynote address, society will never be the same again with so many women working outside the home. This change in work patterns creates pressures for social change that cannot go unmet forever. Furthermore, with the feminization of poverty, some of the differences aomng women due to class are eroding. The students of today, even those who worry many feminists because of a complacency seemingly generated by the belief that women have won what they need (obviously a complacency foreign to most women of color, and poor women), have numerous expectations and needs that cannot be met by the traditional curriculum. Students will, in time and in their own way, constitute a force to be reckoned with in the effort to add women to the curriculum. At a time of rapidly changing values, two things always seem to happen simultaneously (although, usually, only one of these survives historically). The first is that

there tends to be a fostering of traditionalism, a grasping to hold on to the old, as changes swirl around. The second is that, in the search for new values, the old are taken more seriously; they are examined for what is worth saving as values change, and what must be modified in the context of real experiences. We see both of these things happening; we have confidence that it will be in the very serious rethinking of old values that humanists will find social changes and young people an ever-increasing source of pressure to continue the revaluation of the traditional curriculum.

SELECTED LISTING OF RESOURCES ON CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

This is a very short list of materials, including a few books, various conference proceedings, and directories of resources and projects on curriculum transformation projects designed to incorporate the new scholarship on women into the traditional curriculum. Obviously, bibliographies of works in Women's Studies would also be essential for scholars interested in beginning this process; these are available in both published and unpublished form. Here we mention some materials that will get you off to a start.

Women's Studies and the Curriculum Proceedings of the Conference on Scholars and Women, March 13-15, 1981, Published in 1983 by Salem College. Copies available from Salem College, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108.

Men's Studies Modified: The Impact of Feminism on the Academic Disciplines, Ed. Dale Spender, Pergamon Press, 1981.

All the Women Were White, All the Blacks Were Men, But Some of Us Were Brave: Black Women's Studies, Ed. Patricia Bell Scott, Barbara Smith, Gloria Hull.

Transforming the Academy: Twelve Schools Working Together. Beth Reed in Change, April, 1982 edition.

The Study of Women in the Liberal Arts Curriculum, special issues of the Forum for Liberal Education, Forum 4(1), Oct. 1981.

Sourcebook for Integrating the Study of Women into the Curriculum. Compiled by Betty Schmitz. Will be available Dec., 1983; includes materials from 10 curriculum projects. Cost: $20.00 before Nov. 15, 1983; $22.00 thereafter; add $1.50 for postage and handling. Write to Betty Schmitz, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717.

Conference Report: Integrating Women into the Traditional Curriculum. SIROW (Southwest Institute for Research on Women), University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizone 85721.

A List of Non-published Materials for Developing Courses and Projects to Integrate the New Scholarship on Women into the Curriculum. Cost: $3.00. Write to Clearinghouse for Curriculum Integration Projects, c/o Betty Schmitz, College of Letters and Sciences, Montana State University, Bozeman MT 59717.

Directory of Programs: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum Through Incorporation of the New Scholarship on Women. Cost: $2.00. Compiled by Peggy McIntosh, Wellsley Center for Research on Women, Wellsley, MA 02161

SELECTED LISTING OF RESOURCES (cont.)

The following scholarly journals in Women's Studies are also important resources:

Signs
Feminist Studies
Feminist Review
Women's Studies
Women's Studies Quarterly
Women's Studies International Journal
Feminist Review of Books

Finally, the Feminist Press has a series of books and publications of syllabi and other course materials that would be invaluable to teachers. Contact them for lists of their materials at:

Feminist Press
Box 334
Old Westbury, New York 11568

EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP

Conference Directors

Dr. Judith S. White
Women's Resources Center
214 Mossman Building
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C. 27412

Dr. Sandra Morgen
Duke-UNC Women's Studies
Research Center
105 E. Duke Building
Durham, N.C. 27708

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Elizabeth Minnich
Professor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of the Union for
Experimenting Colleges and
Universities
Consultant in Women's Studies
400 East Tremont Avenue
Charlotte, N.C. 28203

Dr. Elizabeth Phillips
Department of English
Wake Forest University
2170 Royall Drive
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27106

Dr. Karen Sacks
Director of Research
Business and Professional
Women Foundation
2012 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D. C. 20036

(Visiting Professor, Anthropology Dept.
Duke University)

Workshop Leaders

* Women's Studies Ten Years Later - A Specialty or a Perspective?

Dr. Inzer Byers
Salem College
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108

Dr. Maggie McFadden
Watauga College
Appalachian State University
Boone, N.C. 28607

* Change and the University Culture - How Some Schools Change (And Some Do Not)

Dr. Margaret S. Smith
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109

Ms. Carol Stoneburner
Guilford College
Greensboro, N.C. 27410

Workshop Leaders (cont.)

* Women, the Novel, and the Syllabus - Confronting Student Expectations

Dr. Gary Ljungquist
Salem College
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108

Dr. Gillian Overing
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109

Ms. Cynthia Caywood
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109

Dr. Mark Reynolds
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109

* "Women Writers" - An Old Convention or a New Aesthetic?

Dr. Mary DeShazer
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109

Dr. Linda B. Bragg
Residential College
Mary Foust 114
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C. 27412

* Women's History or Women in History?

Dr. William Chafe
105 East Duke Building
Duke University
Durham, N.C. 27708

Dr. Kathleen Berkley
UNC-Wilmington
Wilmington, N.C. 28403

* Black Women's Studies - Integrating Women of Color into the Curriculum

Dr. Anne Carver
University of North Carolina
at Charlotte
Charlotte, N.C. 28202

* "A Women's Morality?" - Values, Socialization, and a Moral Code

Dr. Helen Trobian
Bennett College
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dr. Mary K. Wakeman
200 C Foust Building
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C. 27412

* The Myth of Universal Inequality and Domesticity - New Questions in Anthropology

Dr. Sandra Morgen
105 East Duke Building
Duke University
Durham, N.C. 27708

Dr. Holly Mathews
East Carolina University
Greenville, N.C. 27834

EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

A Conference on Women's Studies and the Humanities

March 17 - 18, 1983

Participant List

Mary B. Abu-Saba
Counseling Center
UNC-Greensboro
379-5874

Kathrynn Adams
Asst. Prof. of Psychology
Guilford College
Friendly Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27410
292-5511

Suzie Bagur
17 Panola, Apt. 3
Asheville, NC 28801

Denise N. Baker
English Dept.
111 McIver
UNC-Greensboro
379-5446 (work)
373-0703 (home)

Elizabeth B. Barnes
Religion Dept.
Duke University
Durham, NC 27511
467-9435

Marilyn Bentov, Ed.D
2330 Hilton Ave., #17
Durham, NC 27707

Elizabeth B. Bond
Asst. Prof. History
Appalachian State Univ.
Boone, NC 28608
(704) 262-2283

Edwin G. Boring, Jr.
Member, Durham Chpt. NOW
1128 Raynor St.
Durham, NC 27703
(919) 688-9598

Meg Breeden
Student, Guilford Coll.
Box 17060
Greensboro, NC 27410
852-2353

Sally Brett
Assoc. Prof. English
East Carolina Univ.
Greenville, NC 27834
757-6398 or 757-6041

Jeutonne P. Brewer
Coll. of Arts & Science
UNC-Greensboro
379-5242

Dr. Kent Brudney
Prof. of Politics
Converse College
E. Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29301
(803) 585-6421 Ext. 225

Ken Caneva
History Dept.
207 McIver
UNC-Greensboro
379-5488

Bertha Carter
Cashier's Office
UNC-Greensboro
379-5831

Carole F. Chase
Asst. Prof. Religion
Elon College
Box 2260
Elon College, NC 27244
584-2350
584-0761

Elizabeth C. Cobham
Instructor
Sampson Technical College
P.O. Drawer 318
Clinton, NC 28328
592-8081

Caroline Connet
English Instructor
Sampson Technical College
P.O. Drawer 318
Clinton, NC 28328
592-8081

Macy A. Creek
Instructor, Dept. of Writing
of Humanities
Central Piedmont Community Coll.
Elizabeth Ave. at Kings Drive
Charlotte, NC 28204
373-6691

Shelley Crisp
Lecturer, English Dept.
UNC-Charlotte
401 Allendale Pl.
Charlotte, NC 28211
(704) 597-4231 or 366-6846

Ann Deagon
Prof. Classical Studies
Guilford College
802 Woodbrook Drive
Greensboro, NC 27410
292-5273 (answering machine)

Helene DiBona
Assoc. Prof. English & Humanities
N.C. Central University
Durham, NC 27707

Gisela Pollak Eno
836 Olive Street
Greensboro, NC 27401
275-5279

Andrew V. Ettin
Prof. English
Wake Forest Univ.
2200 Faculty Dr., 4-D
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
723-0656

Virginia Foxx
Asst. Dean
General College
Appalachian State Univ.
Boone, NC 28608
(704) 262-2167

Allie Funk
Sociology
Appalachian State Univ.
Boone, NC 28608
(704) 262-2293

Lisa Goldman
Mary Foust, Room 210
UNC-Greensboro

Jean Gordon
History
UNC-Greensboro
272-4607

John Byars
300 Greengate Lane
Spartanburg, SC 29302

Dr. Joan Gregory
Head, Dept. of Art
McIver Building
UNC-Greensboro
379-5248

Joan S. Griffin
Visiting Lecturer
English Dept.
N.C. Central Univ.
Durham, NC 27609
(919) 683-6252

Franzisha Gygax
Asst. Lecturer
Berne Univ.
Switzerland

Judith B. Harris
Secretary
Women's Resource Ctr.
UNC-Greensboro
379-5496

Ann Holbrooks
English Instructor
Davidson Co. Comm. Coll.
Lexington, NC 27292
(704) 249-8186

Charlotte K. Hurwitz
Instructor
Guilford Tech. Coll.
5000 Robert Andrews Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27406
697-7941

Pat Jarrard
Dept. of Speech Comm.
UNC-Chapel Hill
115 Bingham Hall
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
962-5050 (work)
274-3387 (home)

Charlotte K. Jones
Dept. of English
St. Mary's College
900 Hillsborough
Raleigh, NC 27611
828-2521 ext. 266

Marcia B. Jones
English/Dean of Students
St. Mary's College
900 Hillsborough
Raleigh, NC 27611
828-2521

Tina Jones
2907 Fairfield Ave.
Greensboro, NC 27408
288-4767

Ruth George Kennedy
Assoc. Prof. English
N.C. Central Univ.
1812 Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27707
683-6261 or 489-2545

Priscilla Leed
704 O'Neill Drive
Jamestown, NC 27282

Jo Alice Leeds
Dept. of Art
UNC-Greensboro
379-5571

Mary Lindemann
Dept. of History
UNC-Wilmington
Wilmington, NC 28406
(919) 791-4330 ext. 2307 or 2316

Helen H. Mackay
Asst. Prof. English
Elon College
Box 2254
Elon College, NC 27244
584-2266

Sharon L. Maitland
Instructional Asst.
Danville Community College
1008 So. Main St.
Danville, VA 24541
797-3553 ext. 211

Malinda Maxfield
Prof. of Humanities & English
Converse College
E. Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29301
(803) 585-6421 ext. 385 or 386

E. Carole McClanahan
Asst. Prof. English
Danville Community College
1008 So. Main St.
Danville, VA 24541
(804) 797-3553 ext. 278

Joanne C. Miller
106 Tandy Ct.
Jamestown, NC 27282

Trudy Mills
Dept. of Sociology
UNC-Greensboro
379-5256

Ramona Morgan
Artist
200 Perrin Pl.
Charlotte, NC 28207
333-8789

Frada L. Mozenter
5421-N Hazelnut Circle
Charlotte, NC 28212

Sue Parry
Counseling Center
UNC-Charlotte
UNCC Station
Charlotte, NC 28223
(704) 597-2104

Joyce Pettis
English Dept.
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27834
757-6571

Patricia J. Regis
General Studies Instr.
Sampson Tech. College
Clinton, NC 28328

Vicki Roberts-Gassler
Instr. Dept. of German
McIver Building
UNC-Greensboro

Sarah M. Robinson
H.P.E.R.D.
108 Park Gym
UNC-Greensboro

Eva Rodtwitt
Romance Languages
Wake Forest University
2170 Rozell Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
725-2770

Lynn Sadler
Director, Div. of Humanities
Bennett College
Greensboro, NC 27420
273-4431 ext. 116

Winifred L. Stoelting
Assoc. Prof. English
N.C. Central University
Durham, NC 27707
(919) 683-6252

Jalyne Strong
English Dept.
UNC-Charlotte
7111-A Village Green Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28215
(704) 568-8294

Janice Stroud
Sociology
UNC-Charlotte
Charlotte, NC 28223
597-4298

Patti Summers
Sheraton Palmetto Inn
Interstate 85 at U.S. 25
4295 Augusta Rd.
Greenville, SC 29605
(803) 277-8921

Sarah Jane Thomas
96 Flint St.
Asheville, NC 28801
254-8116

Janice Joan Thompson
Instr. of English
Sampson Technical Coll.
P.O. Box 318
Clinton, NC 28328
(919) 592-8081

Melanie Topp
English Dept.
UNC-Chapel Hill
817 Old Pittsboro Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 962-5481

Barbara Weiss
Counselor, Adult Student Office
UNC-Greensboro
379-5263

Gretchen Whalen
Rt. 4, Box 304-H
Hendersonville, NC 28739
692-6508

Dr. Ann L. Wood
School of Education
UNC-Greensboro
379-5044
852-3481

Additions

Dorothy Bardolph
207 Tate
Greensboro, NC 27403
275-0080

Kath Dunn Barrow
1864 Faculty Drive
Winston-Salem, NC
722-8596

Susan Borwick
Chairperson, Music Dept.
Wake Forest Univ.
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
761-5107

Blanche R. Curry
Division of Core Studies
Shaw University
118 East Street
Raleigh, NC 27611
755-4805

Sarah Malino
Guilford College Hist. Dept.
Friendly Ave.
Greensboro, NC

Harriett P. Miller
Core Studies
Shaw University
1601 South St.
Raleigh, NC 27611
755-4893

Margie Richey
CCE Student
Guilford College
1005 Bearhollow Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27410

Brenda R. Shaw
Asst. Prof. of English
N.C. Central Univ.
Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27707
682-6274

Marcia C. Still
Anthropology Dept.
Duke University
1013 Gloria Ave., Apt. 4
Durham, NC 27701

Jeanette Stokes
Presby House
UNC-Greensboro
P.O. Box 1365
Greensboro, NC 27402

Claudette Franklin
Dir. of Minority Affairs
Guilford College
Friendly Ave.
Greensboro, NC

Catherine Vanderburgh
Core Division
Shaw University
118 E. South St.
Raleigh, NC 27611
755-4951

Lynne Wentworth
Duke University
Rt. #1, Box 254
Chapel Hill, NC 27514